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SATURDAY
MAY 23, 1953

We went for lunch today to the Château La Villette, the Robert Gérards' beautiful Mansard house, about an hour's drive from Paris. It is my favorite medium-sized country house in France. Johnnie Lucinge, Marie Louise Bousquet, and eight or ten other people were there.

Tonight we saw a popular play in Paris "L'Heure Eblouissante". It is an entertaining piece by an Italian, but the translation has rather inappropriately placed the scene in England.

The plot is that a talented country organist wishes to play some of his compositions under the best auspices in London. The great patron who controls such designations is a rakish member of the aristocracy who occupies the powerful position of sheriff. The mayor in the organist's little city knows the sheriff's weakness for attractive women and, after a great deal of family discussion, arranges to have the sheriff asked to the organist's house, where his beautiful but somewhat prim-appearing wife is to solace the sheriff's evening.

Things then become complicated for, as the wife objects, the most attractive of the local tarts is prevailed upon to take the wife's place. Since the wife must be carefully hidden during this proceeding, she goes and occupies the gay lady's apartment. The substitute arrives, takes a fancy to the organist and he to her. She is intrigued by the pleasures of a domestic life and when the sheriff arrives on the scene and sends the husband to bed the substitute changes her mind and appeals to the organist to protect her from the villain. The sheriff is ejected from the house and, having no place to go, asks at a local tavern where he can find the best entertainment in the city. He then erupts into the luxurious apartment where the wife has sought refuge. The wife meanwhile, on the insistence of the tart's maid, has arrayed herself in such finery as she

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had never before seen and turns out to be extremely beautiful. Two roistering blades wander into the apartment and insist on plying her with champagne. She becomes very tight and at that point the sheriff comes in and dismisses the other two visitors. The scene ends with the sheriff telling her of his disappointing adventure at the organist's house and how he is going to punish the mayor and the organist for it. In the case of the latter, the organist will not get the desired patronage and his career will be ruined. She then announces that she is the organist's wife and, after an exhortation by him about a magnificent hour together, they go off singing to bed.

The final act shows the organist and his wife at home, but he has turned from his serious compositions to playing love tunes. The tart has become the scandal of the village because, as a result of contact with the organist, she now insists on attending all the church services and the local ladies wish to have her forbidden to do so. The organist has begun to regret [redacted] that he antagonized the powerful patron when finally, to everyone's surprise, the mayor receives a decoration from the King and the organist a letter telling him that all arrangements have been completed for the presentation of his work in London. The organist ascribes all this to his own genius and is [redacted] curt with the mayor, who thinks [redacted] he has been helpful in regard to it. The wife has a little cackle to herself, but then some blundering friend who has seen the sheriff outside of the tart's apartment tells the mayor about it, but finally everything is solved to everyone's satisfaction and the husband is left in possession of his illusions.

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